

Message Text

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21

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4917

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0088

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SF, AO

SUBJ: VORSTER DEFENDS ANGOLAN POLICY

1. SUMMARY: IN A HIGHLY PARTISAN SPEECH AND WITHOUT PROVIDING FURTHER DETAILS, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER DEFENDED SAG'S INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA AS NECESSARY TO PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA'S BORDERS AND TO THWART SOVIET IMPERIALIST AIMS. SPEAKING JAN. 30 DURING NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE IN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, VORSTER ALSO DEFENDED DOMESTIC POLICIES AND CLAIMED THAT RACE RELATIONS HAD NEVER BEEN BETTER. HE ASSERTED THAT DETENTE WITH OTHER AFRICAN STATES CONTINUING AS SOUTH OVERCOMES THE ANTAGONISTIC PROPAGANDA DISSIMINATED BY ENEMIES OUTSIDE AND BY SUSPECT ELEMENTS WITHIN NATION. ON NIMIBIAN ISSUE PRIME MINISTER CATEGORICALLY REJECTED CONCEPT THAT THERE MAY BE EXPLOITABLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SWAPO WINGS DESCRIBING THEIR COMMUNIST ORIGIN. OFFICIAL TEXT OF SPEECH NOT YET AVAILABLE. FOLLOWING ARE SALIENT POINTS NOTED BY EMBOFFS WHO ATTENDED DEBATE AND BY PRESS. END SUMMARY.

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WM SPEAKING IN PARLIAMENT AFTERNOON JANUARY 30 PRIME MINISTER

VORSTER ADDED NO NEW DETAILS TO NATURE OF SAG INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. HE DID STATE THAT IN PROCESS OF CHASING MPLA AND CUBAN FORCES FROM SWA BORDER AREA SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS HAD GONE "A VERY LONG WAY INTO ANGOLA". VORSTER AGAIN DEFENDED SECRECY OF OPERATIONS BY ALLUDING TO UNIDENTIFIED AND DELICATE INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND BY ASSERTING THAT EXPANDED PRESS COVERAGE MIGHT HAVE COST LIVES. IN JUSTIFICATION, PM NOTED THAT ONE OF PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF AMERICAN DEFEAT IN VIET NAM WAS OVERLY HEAVY U.S. PRESS INVOLVEMENT.

3. VORSTER PLACED SOUTH AFRICA'S INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA IN CONTEXT OF HIS POLITICAL WORLD VIEW WHICH HOLDS THAT SOVIET COMMUNISM'S GOAL REMAINS WORLD DOMINATION. WHILE AVOIDING DIRECT CRITICISM OF U.S., HE ARGUED THAT FAILURE OF WEST TO ACT IN ANGOLA PROMPTED BY FIXATION ON NUCLEAR WAR AND DESIRE TO PROMOTE DETENTE SO AS TO AVOID IT. PM ARGUED THAT NEXT WORLD WAR WILL BE CONVENTIONAL ONE IN WHICH SOVIET'S PLANNING TO DEMONSTRATE OVERWHELMING SUPERIORITY AND IN WHICH VITAL RESOURCES OF SOUTH AFRICA WILL PLAY LEADING ROLE. THUS, SOVIET TAKEOVER OF SOUTH AFRICA IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THEIR WORLD STRATEGY. ORIGINAL RUSSIAN PLAN HAD BEEN TO FORCE SAG TO FIGHT ON THREE FRONTS: ANGOLA, RHODESIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. HOWEVER, SUCCESS OF SAG DIPLOMACY HAD RUINED THAT SOVIET PLAN. SOVIET'S ALSO ANXIOUS TO ESTABLISH BELT ACROSS SOUTHERN AFRICA WHICH WOULD BE ANCHORED IN MPLA-CONTROLLED ANGOLA AND WOULD RUN THROUGH ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA, BOTH TO BE WEAKENED BY COMMUNIST SUBVERSION. OTHER END WOULD HOOK UP WITH TANZANIA WHICH WOULD HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO COOPERATE. (IN THIS REGARD VORSTER NOTED KAUNDA'S DECLARATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY HAD BEEN PREDICTABLE AND UNDERSTANDABLE).

4. PM STATED THAT BY INVOLVING NATION IN ANGOLA SAG HAD FORESTALLED COMPLETE MPLA AND CUBAN TAKEOVER OF ANGOLA WHICH IN TURN WOULD HAVE MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR OAU NOT TO RECOGNIZE MPLA AS SOLE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT. SAG'S ACTION ALSO AIDED TO STEM FLOW OF REFUGEES INTO SWA AND REVEALED TO WORLD NATURE OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN BATTLE. VORSTER STRESSED THAT SAG HAD NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN "CIVIL WAR" BETWEEN BLACKS, NOR HAD IT ABANDONED ITS POLICY OF NONINTERVENTION
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IN AFFAIRS OF OTHER NATIONS. "IT WAS NOT INTERFERENCE, WE ACTED IN SELF DEFENCE." IN THIS REGARD PM STATED THAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANGOLAN AND MOZAMBIKAN SITUATIONS OBVIOUS. WHEREAS MOZAMBIKAN INDEPENDENCE ACCOMPANIED BY CREATION OF STABLE GOVERNMENT WITH WHAT SAG COULD COMMUNICATE IN SOME FASHION NO SUCH FORCE EXISTED IN ANGOLA. FURTHER, UNLIKE MOZAMBIQUE, HOSTILE FORCES IN ANGOLA HAD BUILT UP ARMS SUPPLIES ALONG BORDER AND HAD ALREADY SHOWN INTENTION TO ALLOW BORDER AREAS TO BE USED BY "TERRORISTS" FOR RAIDS INTO TERRITORY UNDER CONTROL OF SAG.

5. PM INDICATED THAT ANGOLAN INVOLVMENT HAD HELPED RATHER THAN HINDERED SAG GOAL OF DETENTE WITH BLACK AFRICA. "THE FACT IS THE GRAPH IS SHOWING AN UPWARD TREND," HE SAID, NOTING INCREASE IN OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL CONTACTS GROWING TRADE TIES AND AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND RECENT ACQUISITION OF LANDING RIGHTS IN BLACK AFRICAN STATE. PRIMARY DIFFICULTY IN DETENT IS OVERCOMING NEGATIVE IMAGE OF SAG WHICH IS FOSTERED OVERSEAS BY VESTED INTERESTS WHO INTENT ON SAG'S DESTRUCTION AND FROM WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA BY UNPATROTIC ELEMENTS. PM REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO LIBERIAN PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S INVITATION TO ROBERT SOBUKWE AS INSTANCE IN WHICH FOREIGN BLACK STATESMAN HAD BEEN MISLED. PM ASSERTED THAT SOBUKWE NOT A LEADER OF HIS PEOPLE AND THE TO HAVE ALLOWED HIM TO ACCEPT TOLBERT'S INVITATION WOULD HAVE BEEN "SLAP IN FACE" TO ELECTED AND TRADITIONAL BLACK LEADERS OF SOUTH AFRICA. PM MADE CLEAR THAT HE BELIEVED PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY HAD PLAYED SOME ROLE IN MISLEADING TOLBERT.

6. IN FACT, SPEECH LACED WITH EVEN MORE THAN USUAL DEROGATORY STATEMENTS ABOUT PRPIN MARKED CONTRAST TO PM'S KID-GLOVE HANDLING OF OFFICIAL OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY. PM IMPLIED THAT HE FELT PRP LEADER EGLIN AND/OR SOME OF HIS ASSOCIATES ARE UNTRUST-WORTHY AND INDICATED BELIEF PRP HAS ALSO PLAYED ROLE IN FOMENTING PROBLEMS WITHIN CERTAIN ELEMENT OF COLORED COMMUNITY LED BY SONNY LEON. HE SAID HE HAD NOT BRIEFED PRP LEADERSHIP ON ANGOLA (AS HE HAD UP AND PRESS EDITORS) BECAUSE OF HIS DISTRUST.

7. ON GENERAL ISSUE OF RACE RELATIONS, VORSTER SAID SITUATION HAD NEVER BEEN BETTER. INDIAN COMMUNITY HAS ACCEPTED HIS PLAN FOR CONSULATIVE CABINET COUNCIL. SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT FOR "BANTU"
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OBVIOUSLY SUCCESSFUL AS WITNESSED BY CHIEF MANGOPE'S STATEMENT THAT HE WILL SEEK INDEPENDENCE FOR BOPHUTHATSWANA HOMELAND. VORSTER TALKED AT LENGTH WITH REFERENCE TO "POLL" CONDUCTED BY BLACK CIRCULATION DAILY NEWSPAPER, THE WORLD, WHICH INDICATED THAT 53 PER CENT OF URBAN BALCKS FEEL THAT HE DOING GOOD JOB AS PRIME MINISTER AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR ARTICLE DESCRIBED THIS FACT AS TRIUMPH FOR AFRIKANER NATIONALIST POLITICIAN. (EMBASSY BELIEVES POLL TO BE UNSCIENTIFIC AT BEST AND WILL REPORT ON IT IN GREATER DETAIL). COLORED ISSUE MORE COMPLEX, BUT VORSTER ADAMANT THAT MASS OF COLORED COMMUNITY DOES NOT SUPPORT LABOR PARTY LEADER SONNY LEON AND HIS CON-FRONTATIONAL TACTICS. PM GOT ENTHUSIASTIC CHEER FROM HIS OWN BENCHES WHEN HE ASSRETED THAT MANY OF THOSE WHO CONTINUALLY CALL FOR DETENTE AT HOME ARE REALLY ASKING FOR SURRENDER AND THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF ABANDONING NATIONAL PARTY'S SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT POLICY.

8. VORSTER DID NOT SPEAK AT LENGTH ON NAMIBIAN ISSUE. HOWEVER,

HE RECOUNTED, AS HE HAS OFTEN IN THE PAST, HIS VIEW OF FORMATION
OF SWAPO, OR AS THEN KNOWN THE OVAMBO PEOPLE'S CONGRESS,
BY WHITE COMMUNITIES IN CAPE TOWN IN 1957 AND STATED THAT HE
WOULD NEVER CHANGE HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS SWAPO NOR SAM NOJOMA.
HE CATEGORICALLY REJECTED IDEA THAT THERE EXISTS ANY DIFFERENCE
IN IDEOLOGY OR APPROACH BETWEEN EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SWAPO
WINGS.
BOWDLER

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